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ABSTRACT

Noting the improvement in the quality of schools and education that occurs when parents are actively involved in their children's schools, this activity guide provides ways that parents can forge partnerships with schools on a variety of levels. Following an invitation from the United States Secretary of Education for parents to participate in the schools, the guide presents general ways to begin to build a community partnership for learning, and provides an alphabetized list of additional ideas for the beginning of the school year. The remainder of the guide presents activity sections on: (1) Helping Children To Learning the Basics and Core Academic Subjects; (2) Creating Safe and Drug-Free Schools that Teach Basic American Values; (3) Making College More Accessible; (4) Getting Technology and Computers into the Classroom; (5) Raising Standards of Achievement and Discipline; and (6) Teaching and Connecting Young People to Real Life Skills that Prepare Them for Work and Adulthood. Each of these sections provide key facts--areas of progress and areas in need of attention; ten specific activities; and a list of additional resources. Information on potential funding for an "America Goes Back to School" partnership program is included, as are sample partnership contracts for schools, employers, and religious institutions. (HTH)

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AMERICA GOES BACK TO SCHOOL

A Place for Families and the Community

Partners' Activity Guide

An Initiative of the Family Involvement Partnership for Learning

PS023590

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The Family Involvement Partnership for Learning comprises the following organizations:

Academy for Educational Development * AFL-CIO * African Methodist Episcopal Church * Agudath Israel of America * American Alliance of Physical and Health Education, Recreation and Dance * American Association for Higher Education * American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education * American Association of School Administrators * American Council for the Arts * American Federation of Teachers * American Gas Association * American Youth Policy Forum * ASPIRA * Assemblies of God * Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development * Association of Christian Schools International * B'nai B'rith International * The Betty Phillips Center for Parenthood Education * Boys and Girls Club of America * The Buddy System Project * The Business Roundtable * Center for Law and Education * Center for the Improvement of Child Caring * Center for the Study of Parent Involvement * Center on Families, Communities, Schools and Children's Learning * Children's Aid Society * Christian Brothers Conference * Church of God in Christ * Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints * Cities in Schools * College Board * Committee for Economic Development * The Communitarian Network * Consumer Product Safety Commission * Corporation for Education Technology * Council for American Private Education * Council for Educational Development and Research * Council for Exceptional Children * Council for Religion in Independent Schools * Council of Bishops of the United Methodist Church * Council of Chief State School Officers * Council of Churches of Greater Washington * Council of Jewish Federations * Council of Spouses of Bishops of the United Methodist Church * Council of the Great City Schools * Educational Publishing Group * Efficacy Institute * ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education * Evangelical Lutheran Church in America * Families and Work Institute * Family Impact Seminars * Family Resource Coalition * Family Service America * Fort Hood, Texas * General Conference of the Seventh Day Adventist Church * General Federation of Women's Clubs * Girl Scouts of the USA * Grandparents Network, AARP * Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America * HIPPY USA * Hispanic Policy Development Project * Home and School Institute * Howard University, School of Education * Institute for Educational Leadership * Institute for Responsive Education * International Reading Association * Katy Elementary School, Texas * Lancaster Area Council of Mennonite Schools * Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod * Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund * Muslim Public Affairs Council * National Alliance for Restructuring Education * National Alliance of Business * National Assembly of National Voluntary Health and Social Welfare Organizations * National Association for Bilingual Education * National Association for the Education of Young Children * National Association of Elementary School Principals *

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AMERICA GOES BACK TO SCHOOL

A PLACE FOR FAMILIES AND THE COMMUNITY

Partners' Activity Guide

An Initiative of the Family Involvement Partnership for Learning

THE INVITATION

"Our children may be only 20% of our population, but they are 100% of our future."

-- U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley

People across America are taking a long, hard look at our schools and discovering some very positive things. When families, educators, and communities work together, schools get better and children get the quality education they need to lead happy, productive lives. For America to move forward and maintain its place as a world leader, and for all of our communities to become prosperous and strong, more individuals need to become involved in improving learning for all children.

Here in 1995 we are at the beginning of an enormous tidal wave of young people going to school. Experts project that by 1997 more young people -- 53 million -- will be going to school than ever before in the history of the nation, surpassing the baby boom generation's peak set in 1971. We need your help and we need to see the education of this generation of children as America's project.

The Family Involvement Partnership for Learning, sponsor of *America Goes Back to School: A Place for Families and the Community*, invites you to get involved in your community. The Partnership is a coalition of more than 140 family, school, community, religious, and business organizations dedicated to supporting family involvement in children's learning through family, school, and community partnerships.

And families need our help. Many parents are stretched to the limit trying to make ends meet, some are even working two jobs and coping with the reality that they do not have the time they want to make an extra contribution to their children's schooling.

Many parents are doing all they can to be actively involved in their children's education in the home. But nearly half of all parents with young children do not spend time reading to or with their children every, or almost every, school day and a third do not spend time helping their children with homework every, or almost every, school day.

The parent/school connection also needs to be stronger and this is where we can help. Parents want schools that set high academic standards and they want to be sure that their children are learning basic American values like honesty, self-reliance and respect for others.

When you get involved in *America Goes Back to School*, you can work on one or more of they key issues that Americans say they want their schools to address. These issues include:

- Helping children to learn the basics and core academic subjects
- Creating safe and drug-free schools that teach basic American values
- Making college more accessible
- Getting technology and computers into classrooms
- Raising standards of achievement and discipline
- Teaching and connecting young people to real life skills that prepare them for work and adulthood

This publication provides information about how you can get involved in these vitally important areas of education. There are plenty of suggested activities—ways you can participate in schools and make a difference in students' learning. By joining the *America Goes Back to School* team, you can help build a true *community partnership for learning* and make your community a better place to live, work, and learn all year round.

The Family Involvement Partnership for Learning also encourages you to become a member of the Partnership by signing up your school, community organization, business, or place of worship. A pledge card is found in the back of this book—just fill it out and get involved. If you like, mail a copy to the partnership so we can count your efforts.

For more information about the Family Involvement Partnership for Learning, or print and video materials on family and community involvement, call 1-800-USA-LEARN.

Come on, AMERICA . . . let's go BACK TO SCHOOL!

This book is offered to stimulate thinking and discussion about how we can all work together to improve our schools. It's a work in progress, and we welcome your suggestions for changes or additions. We would especially like to hear about effective programs or practices that have worked to make education better in your community. Send your comments to the Family Involvement Partnership for Learning, 600 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20202-8173.

HOW TO BUILD YOUR COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP FOR LEARNING

All across America, communities are pulling together to strengthen education because they know it's the key to helping our young people succeed and to making communities strong, safe, and prosperous.

For communities, making education better means strengthening families and schools. Families are responsible for raising children, and parents are their children's first and most important teachers. Schools are responsible for providing children with a quality education. But these days, schools and families often can't do their job by themselves. They need each other—and they need the help of everyone in the community. Volunteer groups, clubs, service organizations and agencies, museums, religious groups, community leaders, retirees, businesses, and every caring citizen—YOU!—can lend a hand and make a big difference. That's what *America Goes Back to School* is all about.

We've learned that when families and community members like you get more involved in children's learning, students get better grades and test scores, are better behaved, graduate from high school at higher rates, and are more likely to go on to higher education. In all these ways, family and community involvement in education help children grow up to be productive, responsible members of the community.

There is no one way to build the team, to build a *community partnership for learning*. Getting together with other concerned people to work together—cooperation—is a big first step. Teamwork among families, schools, community and service groups, religious organizations, businesses, and other citizens is needed. As the saying goes, "Many hands make light work." By working together, we can achieve our goals more effectively than any of us could do alone.

The key to a successful back-to-school effort is planning the year-long activities. Here are some suggested steps:

1 Call your school and schedule a **start-up meeting with your school principal** and other interested volunteers. If you are interested in helping in a college, call the president's or dean's office to offer assistance.

2 **Appoint a school-volunteer coordinator** at your first meeting or ask your school's principal and teachers if you can work through the local school volunteer coordinator. **Take an inventory** of what activities are already under way that address the six issues.

3 Determine **which of the six issues will be useful to work on for the school year**. You may pick one or more. In fact, you may want to choose none of the six issues found in this book but may decide to pick another critical issue that concerns your schools, parents, and community.

4 Develop a **planning calendar showing who will be participating in what activity and when.** The school-volunteer coordinator will be responsible for keeping the calendar and sending out reminders to participating volunteers.

5 Ask the school principal if you can **use your school's regular "back-to-school" activities** to let parents and the community know about your efforts. Use these events to enlist additional volunteers.

6 Develop and **implement your plan.**

7 Meet regularly with the principal, teachers, and other volunteers to **review your progress**.

8 **Evaluate your results**. Then write to the Family Involvement Partnership for Learning in May 1996 to tell us what you've accomplished and what you've learned. This will help us all do better next year.

Your effort may follow this model or develop its own way of doing things. What matters is that your principal, teachers, families, and community are forming partnerships to improve learning. Through teamwork, we can mobilize our ingenuity, skills, and deep concern for our children's—and our community's—future.

BACK-TO-SCHOOL FROM A TO Z

Here is a variety of ideas you can use to make your back-to-school effort effective and exciting.

A is for Awards–During planned events, such as mall exhibits or banquets, present awards to outstanding employers or civic, cultural, and religious groups, or members of the armed forces for their outstanding support of schools and families. Present an award to an outstanding education, art, science, technology, or environmental reporter at your local newspaper who highlighted family-school-community partnerships. Consider awarding a cash contribution or gift to the individual school or education program making the most progress.

B is for Banquet–Sponsor a special banquet with a prominent speaker. Invite local employers, artists, community leaders, religious leaders, military base commanders, and others who should know about your efforts to build a community partnership for learning. Use the banquet as an opportunity to showcase successful partnerships.

C is for Correspondence–Purchase a postage slug saying "Proud Supporter of *America Goes Back to School*" for your office postage meter. Your correspondence will highlight your support. You can find out how to have a slug made at your local post office.

D is for Discover–Participate in student outreach and enrichment programs. Assist local elementary, middle, and secondary schools with extracurricular activities such as science and math clubs, sports and cultural programs, and other community organizations to highlight your year-long back-to-school efforts. Offer internships to college and high school students in businesses and nonprofit institutions. Provide community service opportunities for college and high school students--an activity called "service learning." Link business, civic, and cultural institutions to schools and colleges through joint programs and training.

E is for Employee Communication–Publicize your *America Goes Back to School* effort by working with the editors and producers of in-house publications and videos at local businesses. Tell them about interesting stories they can run in their publications about your volunteers. Provide logos and graphics to make the stories more appealing. And invite the businesses you work with to join your community partnership.

F is for Film Festival–Sponsor a film festival at a local university or school. Show movies that touch on issues of family involvement in children's learning or helping families pay for college. Keep the event free or charge a nominal fee to help raise scholarship money or funds to pay for technology or any other services or materials your schools might need. Promote the event through local radio and newspapers.

G is for Government and Public Space–Create special exhibits in public buildings showcasing on-going back-to-school activities. Leave handouts such as bookmarks and brochures that tell employees and their families how they can get involved.

H is for Health Fair–Host a community health fair at a local hospital or university medical center. It's a good way to meet neighbors and chat with them about your back-to-school program. Offer free blood pressure readings, cholesterol screenings, nutritional advice, lectures, and demonstrations. Enlist health workers as mentors for local youth and college students.

I is for Industry Programs–Take advantage of the advertising expertise of your business partners. Produce local public service announcements or video news releases about local corporate partners' family-friendly activities. Advertising can also provide clear information to students and families about the type of skills and knowledge needed to get good jobs in today's complex economy.

J is for Joining–Enlist as many families and community members in *America Goes Back to School* as possible. Everyone has something to contribute to our schools. Don't overlook high school students and other young people who can serve as tutors and mentors for younger children; elementary school students often look up to older students. Offering service learning opportunities is one effective way to include youth in your efforts.

K is for Kin–Bring all family members interested in helping their children and young people learn into your local partnerships. Mothers, fathers, grandparents, aunts, uncles, older brothers and sisters--even family friends--all can play a role in helping their special student learn. Fathers, especially, need to be brought into the learning process. Schools need to focus on the importance of fathers in children's lives.

L is for Libraries–Sponsor a demonstration or exhibit at your local library of the *America Goes Back to School* initiative. Work with the schools and community and corporate sponsors to maximize neighborhood and community-wide literacy efforts. Expand READ*WRITE*NOW! and other reading partnerships with families, community groups, and others. READ*WRITE*NOW!, sponsored by the U. S. Department of Education and the Family Involvement Partnership for Learning, is a program that connects children with reading partners such as librarians, parents, summer project coordinators, senior citizens, teachers, and students from Grades 7 and up. For free READ*WRITE*NOW! information and materials, call the U. S. Department of Education at 1-800-USA-LEARN.

M is for the Media–Work with newspapers to spotlight school activities or sponsor a special back-to-school supplement. Work with local television and radio stations to organize public affairs programs that can showcase examples of school-community partnerships. Include the media as corporate sponsors.

N is for Networks–Take an inventory of the partnerships, networks, and services already under way in your community. Build on these existing efforts and structures, find ways to join them together, and link schools and colleges.

O is for Open House–Offer open-house programs that provide information about your *America Goes Back to School* efforts. Invite everyone in the community to attend and recruit new volunteers. Regular back-to-school activities are a good time to do this, too. To make the program interesting, include hands-on learning activities for visitors and have students showcase what they are learning, especially if it involves computers. Advertise open-house programs on radio, TV, and in the newspapers, and invite reporters to cover the event.

P is for Partnership Pledges–Build local partnerships among families and schools, community groups, religious organizations, employers, members of the military, and local law enforcement officials. Ask each group to sign on to the Family Involvement Partnership for Learning by endorsing the *Strong Families, Strong Schools Compact, the Statement of Common Purpose*, or the *Employer's Promise*. Be sure to display the Pledge at each of your partner facilities and reproduce it in newsletters and programs. (See samples of each at the back of this book.)

Q for Quality Education–Enrich school activities with partnership efforts that build a quality education. The purpose of America Goes Back to School is to offer every child a richer curriculum and school experience. By involving families, community members, religious groups, and business leaders, children are afforded a wide variety of caring adults who can guide them, not only in areas of learning, but in character and citizenship as well.

R is for the 3 R's--Teaching the basics--reading, writing, and arithmetic--at home and at school is the foundation of academic success. READ*WRITE*NOW! and

other new reading and writing activities offered on the Internet as part of the Family Involvement Partnership for Learning can be cornerstone activities of your back-to-school effort. (See "L is for Libraries" above for information about the READ*WRITE*NOW! program and a number to call for free materials.)

S is for Speakers Bureau–Coordinate a local back-to-school speakers bureau and contact local civic, cultural, and religious organizations to offer speakers throughout the year. Tap the expertise of your school and/or college faculty, the business skills of parents, or the experience of grandparents. Law enforcement officials, local military base commanders, and other members of the armed services make excellent speakers, too. Find people who are comfortable with public speaking and who have the time to make appearances. Develop a list of speech topics appropriate for each audience.

T is for Tour–Organize tours of successful back-to-school partnership activities that enhance students' learning. Ask your tour participants for new ideas that can improve next year's efforts. Also, organize tours of local college campuses for middle and high school students and their families to continually reinforce the benefits of postsecondary learning.

U is for University Programs–Work with the local university newspaper and/or radio station to highlight stories about on-going research, notable alumni, and other topics that deal with one of the six critical *America Goes Back to School* issues, as well as other issues that are identified. Work with the campus video department to film events.

V is for Valuing Partners–Respect and value the efforts of all caring adults and young people who have the desire, motivation, and time to participate in your community partnership for learning. Provide your partners with the recognition they deserve through certificates, pins, luncheons, award ceremonies, and special interest stories in the local press.

W is for Winning–Publicize all your success stories. Not only can you contact the media, but you can deliver your message in a variety of different places--on billboards, cable television, radio, supermarket parking lots, and sporting events. Encourage local sportscasters to mention partnership activities during their broadcasts.

X is for X Marks the Spot–Sign up for the Family Involvement Partnership for Learning!

Y is for Year Long–Plan to make your *America Goes Back to School* program an all-year-round effort. This is not a one-day or temporary activity. Improvement in education doesn't happen overnight; it takes a sustained effort. By focusing on one of the critical six issues--or more--you can change your school for the better and positively affect children's learning.

Z is for Zoos–Zoos, cultural institutions, museums, and parks are not only popular places, but they're great teaching and learning institutions, too. Link your local cultural and scientific institutions with schools and families to enhance learning. Celebrate the successful close of your *America Goes Back to School* efforts in one of these exciting locations.

Now you have many ideas you can use. We're sure you can think of many more! In the following pages, we'll discuss the six critical issues we're suggesting that you focus on, and show you how your *America Goes Back to School* effort can have a real impact in all these areas.

HELPING CHILDREN TO LEARN THE BASICS AND CORE ACADEMIC SUBJECTS

I. Key Facts

Areas of Progress. *Over the past 10 years the nation has made progress in several areas on which schools, families, communities, states and this nation have focused attention:*

✓ **More students are taking college preparatory courses.** By 1994, the proportion of high school graduates taking the core courses recommended in the 1983 report, *A Nation at Risk*--four years of English, three years of social studies, three years of science, and three years of math--had tripled.

✓ **Math and science student achievement is generally up.** Student performance on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) has increased significantly in science and math, reflecting higher math standards and attention paid to these subjects. The gap in performance between minority students and others has been narrowing.

✓ **Dropout rates have declined.** Overall, the dropout rate for students aged 16 to 24 has declined from 14 percent in 1982 to 11 percent in 1993. Dropout rates declined between 1982 and 1993 by four percentage points for whites and five percentage points for African-Americans. However, dropout rates for Hispanics remain relatively high and are not declining.

Areas that Need Attention. *American education is beginning to turn the corner, but there is still a great need for improvement.*

o **Reading achievement is stagnating.** While American students read better than students in most other countries, reading achievement has not improved for a number of years; just one-quarter to one-third of our students are reading at proficient levels.

- **College or tech-prep is not the norm**. Too many students are still in the general track, not preparing for either college or careers after high school.

- **America ranks poorly in math and science.** While math and science achievement have improved, student performance is generally low compared to other industrialized countries.

- **College remediation is too common.** Too many high school graduates must enroll in remedial classes in the basics in college.

II. Ten Activities That Can Help Students Learn the Basics

1 **Families**: Read to your children or grandchildren in a way that actively involves the child. Ask and answer questions about pictures and people in the story and point to pictures, letters, and words. Ask older students questions that get them to think and solve problems. Be sure your children or grandchildren watch you read. Dads and granddads can be especially important role models for their sons.

2 **Families**: Limit the amount of television your child views to no more than two hours on school nights and help children select the right programs for their age. Watch television together and discuss the programs. Studies show that academic achievement drops sharply for children who watch TV more than two hours a day, and the quality of programming is also a concern.

3 **Families**: Set high standards for your students' course work, encourage your students to work hard to achieve those standards, and make sure they complete their homework every night.

4 **Families and schools**: Start a school-wide family reading program using the U.S. Department of Education's READ*WRITE*NOW! materials. (Free materials can be obtained for children in your family or school by calling 1-800-USA-LEARN.) Recruit and organize reading tutors. Offer a reading challenge in which students read a certain number of minutes each day or a specific number of books within one month. Sponsor a sign-up day

for public library cards at the school. Reward the children when they meet the challenge with a special activity.

5 **Schools**: Rigorously teach the basics and core academic subjects and encourage family involvement in teaching and learning the basics. Let families know what they can do at home to help.

6 **Schools**: Use interesting, real-life settings in your community to stimulate learning. Organize students and their families to conduct an oral history project, a history or case study of their school or neighborhood, an environmental monitoring project, or a folklife project that involves collecting local stories, recipes for a community cookbook, or learning local songs, art, or folk dances.

7 **Community groups, religious organizations, businesses, and armed forces organizations**: Arrange reading partners (it can be anyone in seventh grade on up to senior citizens) with whom children can read for 20 minutes a day. Ask families to encourage their children to read every day. The most important way parents can improve their young children's reading skills is to read aloud to them. Work with your school or community librarian to select high-quality books for students of all ages. Sponsor a "write to grandparents" activity once a month.

8 **Community members**: Sponsor a "Family Math" (or Family Science, Family Geography, etc.) program where parents and other family members work with children. Sponsor events where community members talk about math in their careers and lead hands-on activities. For example, local merchants can talk about how math is used in their stores. Students can be asked to calculate the price of food in a grocery cart; weigh produce and calculate its cost; figure the reduced cost of items on sale; and figure sales taxes, commissions, or tips.

9 **Community groups, religious organizations, businesses, law enforcement officials, and members of the armed services**: Provide tutors for students during the school day and after school. Start or expand adult literacy training in core subjects.

10 **Community groups, religious organizations, and businesses**: Donate telephones, voice-mail, and personnel to begin a community homework hotline to keep parents informed and help children with homework. Donate telephones and voice-mail equipment, if necessary, and ask members of your organization to participate.

III. Where To Go for More Help

ORGANIZATIONS

Seek out your local school, parent-school organization, community group, or house of worship for more help. In addition, more than 20 Parent Information and Resource Centers will be funded through Title IV of the GOALS 2000: Educate America Act by September 31, 1995. The law authorizes one center in every state by 1998. The following national organizations can also provide you with more information.

The National PTA
135 South La Salle
Department 1860
Chicago, IL 60674-1860
312-549-3253

Family Math
Lawrence Hall of Science
University of California
Berkeley, CA 94720-5200
510-642-6550

Family Geography Challenge
National Geographic Society
1145 17th Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20036
202-828-6686

The National Association of Elementary School Principals
1615 Duke St.
Alexandria, VA 22314
1-800-386-2377

National Engineers Week Headquarters
1420 King Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
703-684-2852
eweek@nspe.org

Even Start Family Literacy Programs
Contact your State Department of Education or Donna Conforti Campbell at the U.S. Department of Education at 202-260-0996.

National Institute on Student Achievement, Curriculum and Assessment
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
U.S. Department of Education
555 New Jersey Ave., N.W.
Washington, DC 20208-5573
202-219-2079.

Turn Off the Violence Citizens Council
822 S. 3rd St., Suite 100
Minneapolis, MN 55415
612-593-8041

PUBLICATIONS

"Common Sense." For this free brochure, contact the National PTA (address and phone number listed above.)

The following publications can be ordered free of charge from the U.S. Department of Education by calling 1-800-USA-LEARN.

- *READ*WRITE*NOW!*
- *Strong Families, Strong Schools: Building Community Partnerships for Learning*
- *Team up for Kids! How Schools Can Support Family Involvement in Education*
- *Be Family-Friendly: It's Good Business!*
- *Employers, Families and Education: Promoting Family Involvement in Learning*

- *Join Together for Kids! How Communities Can Support Family Involvement in Education*
- *Summer Home Learning Recipes*
- *Preparing Your Child for College*
- *A Teacher's Guide to the U.S. Department of Education*

Videos available for two-week loans by calling 1-800-USA-Learn:

The U.S. Department of Education has available tapes of the Goals 2000 Satellite Town Meetings and other products that are available free of charge through a lending library. VHS videotapes are available on loan for a two- week period. The Goals 2000 Satellite Town Meeting is not copyrighted and viewers are encouraged to make copies and distribute them in their communities. If you plan to broadcast the Satellite Town Meeting and need a broadcast-quality 3/4" videotape, call 1-800-USA-LEARN. These videos include:

Satellite Town Meeting #23 **June 20, 1995**
"Learning to Read: Creating More Literate Students and Adults"

Satellite Town Meeting #21 **April 20, 1995**
"Ready to Learn: Preparing Children for Success in School"

Satellite Town Meeting #20 **March 21, 1995**
"Math and Science: Education for the 21st Century"

Satellite Town Meeting #12 **April 19, 1994**
"Helping U.S. Students To Be First in the World in Math and Science"

Satellite Town Meeting #4 **June 22, 1993**
"All Children 'Ready to Learn'"

Other publications available from the U.S. Department of Education:

What Schools Can Do To Improve Math & Science Achievement for Minorities and Female Students. Free from the Office for Civil Rights. Call 1-800-421-3481 (in the District of Columbia, call 202-205-5413.)

- *Transforming Ideas for Teaching and Learning Mathematics*
- *High Standards for All Students*
- *Helping Your Child Learn Math*
- *Helping Your Child Learn Science*
- *Helping Your Child Learn History*
- *Helping Your Child Learn to Read*

Call or write:
U.S. Department of Education
National Library of Education
555 New Jersey Ave., NW, Suite 101
Washington, DC 20208-5721
1-800-424-1616

The National Education Goals Panel Report 1994: Building a Nation of Learners. Call the U. S. Government Printing Office, 202-783-3238.

Schools can receive funding to help students learn the basics and the core academic subjects. Your school may qualify. *For information, see page 58.*

CREATING SAFE AND DRUG-FREE SCHOOLS THAT TEACH BASIC AMERICAN VALUES

I. Key Facts

Areas of Progress. *Many schools across the country have devised innovative, firm, and fair ways to confront safety and drug problems. As a result, we see examples of schools that have turned themselves around.*

✓ **The Savannah School in Rosemead, Cal.,** changed elementary students' attitudes toward violence by including student council and class representatives in the planning, development, and implementation of school programs. The school was deeply at risk, bordered on either side by two warring gangs. Rules were restructured so that they were clear to students, staff, and parents.

✓ **The parents at John G. Riley Elementary School in Tallahassee, Fla.,** took back their neighborhood from crime. The community that surrounds the school has the highest crime rate in the city. Yet parents formed a neighborhood association with the help and support of the U.S. Attorney's Weed and Seed program. The results have been dramatic. At least 20 drug-related arrests have been made and some drug dealers have been jailed. There are now fewer drug-related suspensions of students, the school is a safe haven before and after school, and the number of community groups using Riley's facilities has grown by 300 percent.

✓ **Hooper Alexander Elementary School in Atlanta, Ga.,** experienced a tragedy when its seventh-grade student council president was killed in gun crossfire resulting from drug activity. This brought the community and school together to fight drugs and violence. Through funds from the Georgia State Lottery, the school bought walkie-talkies for administrators, call-back intercom systems were installed in

each classroom, and a security fence was erected. Police patrol the area on bicycles, and the PTA hired a security guard to patrol the campus during evening programs.

Areas that Need Attention. *While most schools are safe and drug-free, a large number of schools in all parts of the country—urban, suburban, and rural—are experiencing problems with crime, violence, and alcohol and drug use. Many students are using alcohol and drugs, bringing weapons—including guns—to school, assaulting or threatening fellow students and teachers, and engaging in disruptive behavior.*

- **Many students are afraid to go to school.** Nearly one in 25 students (4 percent) missed at least one day of school during the 30 days before the 1995 Youth Risk Behavior survey because they felt unsafe at school or going to or from school.

- **Weapons are common in schools.** More than 1 in 10 students (12 percent) carried a weapon on school property during the same period.

- **Drug use among students is on the rise.** Drug use among 10th and 12th graders has been on rise for two consecutive years, and it has risen for three straight years among 8th graders.

II. Ten Activities To Help Ensure Your School Is Safe, Disciplined, and Drug-Free

1 **Families**: Talk to children about the dangers of alcohol and drug use. Make sure they have up-to-date information about alcohol and drugs and understand that hanging out with others who use alcohol, drugs, and weapons can affect their own safety, self-reliance, and relationships with people whose respect they value.

2 **Families and schools**: Work together to teach core American values and develop character education programs. Set standards of behavior and clear expectations for children and students. Read the school's discipline policies and discuss them with young people. Talk with them about how school rules support the rights of all students to attend schools that are free of violence and substance abuse.

Practice clear responses to people who are intoxicated, abusive, aggressive, or hostile.

3 **Families and community groups**: Build a network with other adults to talk about issues such as alcohol, drug use, violent behavior, and school safety. Form a parents' organization or community association, such as "parent patrols" or "security dads and moms," that work in and around the school to discourage alcohol and drug abuse and ward off unwanted intruders.

4 **Families, community groups, religious organizations, and law enforcement officials**: Work with the school to develop responses to violence and substance abuse that let students know that all parties view the problem the same way. Help develop school policies on disruptive and violent behavior and drugs. Good policies make it absolutely clear what the rules are—and spell out the consequences for violations.

5 **Families, community members, religious organizations, businesses, law enforcement officials, and members of the military**: Help plan and participate in school and community alcohol- and drug-free activities, including weekend dances and social events, holiday celebrations, proms, and graduation parties. Sponsor after-school and summer learning activities and sports and cultural events. Encourage students to help set the rules for these events.

6 **Schools**: Teach our basic American values, provide character education, and lead by example. Establish firm, fair rules, and keep in touch with families on a regular basis before problems arise. Make sure all families have a copy of the school's discipline code and urge them to read it. Review the code periodically and involve parents and students in the process. Working with parents to develop solid character education programs.

7 **Community organizations and religious groups**: Involve young people and their families in developing programs and policies, and appoint students to advisory committees or other groups which set community policies on violence and substance abuse.

8 **Businesses, religious groups, law enforcement groups, and military organizations**: Reinforce common American values by setting an example. Sponsor sports teams, bands, chess clubs, arts activities, and other activities for children when they are not in school that reinforce fairness and other positive values.

9 **Community groups, local law enforcement, religious organizations, and businesses**: Help create safe corridors for children on their way to and from school by extending your place of business beyond your doors. Businesses can also identify themselves as "Safe Spaces"—places youth can go if they are being threatened. The police can work with businesses, parents, and schools to design and implement patrols which bring officers into schools and other areas where children congregate.

10 **Local news organizations and television stations**: Cover positive stories about youth activities and accomplishments, especially stories that portray young people exhibiting the core American values of honesty, loyalty, and respecting others. They make great human interest stories.

III. Where To Go for More Help

ORGANIZATIONS

You can seek help from local sources such as your local parent-school organization, school board, community agencies, and law enforcement agencies. The following organizations also provide assistance and information:

American Council for Drug Education
204 Monroe St.
Rockville, MD 20850
301-294-0600

Institute on Black Chemical Abuse
2514 Nicollet Ave.
Minneapolis, MN 55408
612-871-7878

"Just Say NO" Clubs
1777 N. California Blvd., Suite 200
Walnut Creek, CA 94596
1-800-258-2766

National Association of Secondary School Principals
1904 Association Drive
Reston, VA 22091
703-860-0200

National Center To Prevent Handgun Violence
1225 Eye St., NW
Washington, DC 20005
202-289-7319

National Crime Prevention Council
1700 K St., NW
Washington, DC 20006
202-466-NCPC

National Families in Action, Inc.
2296 Henderson Mill Road, Suite 300
Atlanta, GA 30345
404-934-6364

National Family Partnership
PO Box 3878
St Louis, MO 63122
314-845-1933

National Institute for Citizen Education in the Law
711 G St., SE
Washington, DC 20003
202-546-6644

National PTA Drug and Alcohol Abuse Prevention Project
330 N. Wabash Ave.
Chicago, IL 60611
312-670-6782

National School Safety Center
4165 Thousand Oaks Blvd., Suite 290
Westlake Village, CA 91362
805-373-9977

Partnership for a Drug Free America
405 Lexington Ave.
New York, NY 10174
212-922-1560
1-800-624-0100

Safe Homes
PO Box 702
Livingston, NJ 07039

CLEARINGHOUSES

National Clearinghouse on Alcohol and Drug Information
PO Box 2345
Rockville, MD 20852
1-800-SAY-NO-TO

Inter-Agency Working Group of Federal Clearinghouses
1-800-788-2800
(Also, see publications guide below)

PUBLICATIONS

Safe Schools Handbook. A comprehensive, five-step approach to resolving safety issues produced by the National Association of Secondary School Principals. Call 1-800-253-PRIN.

The Catalog of Selected Federal Publications on Illegal Drug and Alcohol Abuse. Includes resource information from the Departments of Education, Justice, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, and the Office of National Drug Control Policy. Call the Inter-Agency Working Group of Federal Clearinghouses at 1-800-788-2800.

The following are available free of charge from the U.S. Department of Education. Call or write:

U.S. Department of Education
600 Independence Ave, SW
Room 602--Portals Bldg.
Washington, DC 20202-6123
1-800-728-6686
202-260-3954

Growing Up Drug-Free: A Parent's Guide to Prevention
Contains information about whom to contact at many of the organizations listed above. Also available in Spanish.

Early Childhood Series -- READY SET GO
For care-givers of 3-, 4-, and 5-year-old children. Available in autumn 1995.

School Administrators' Violence Prevention Resource Anthology
Includes articles covering many aspects of violence prevention. Available in autumn 1995.

CHALLENGE
Newsletters on topics regarding substance abuse prevention. Reprints subject to availability.

Schools Without Drugs
Available in Spanish.

Youth and Alcohol
A reprint of the Surgeon General's report to the nation.

Success Stories
Booklets which provide information on schools that have received national recognition for their comprehensive substance abuse and violence prevention programs, practices, and policies.

Learning To Live Drug-Free
A compilation of suggested lesson plans and curriculum supplements for all grades in several subject areas.

AUDIO-VISUAL AIDS

Changing Channels
This video with student activities and teacher's guide has been mailed to middle schools throughout the country.

Teaching Children Affected by Substance Abuse
A taped teleconference discusses successful techniques for helping children.

Other videos available for two-week loans by calling 1-800-USA-Learn:

The U.S. Department of Education has available tapes of the Goals 2000 Satellite Town Meetings and other products that are available free of charge through a lending library. VHS videotapes are available on loan for a two- week period. The Goals 2000 Satellite Town Meeting is not copyrighted and viewers are encouraged to make copies and distribute them in their communities. If you plan to broadcast the Satellite Town Meeting and need a broadcast-quality 3/4" videotape, call 1-800-USA-LEARN. These videos include:

Satellite Town Meeting #19 **February 21, 1995**
"Safe Schools: Providing Our Children with a Disciplined and Drug-Free Learning Environment"

Satellite Town Meeting #5 **July 20, 1993**
"Safe, Disciplined, & Drug-Free Schools"

Solving Youth Violence: Partnerships that Work **August 16, 1994**
A special two-hour teleconference featuring Vice President Al Gore and examples of programs successfully addressing the problems of youth violence.

POSTERS

The following are available free of charge from the U.S. Department of Education (see address above.)

- *Turtle Talk (Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles)*

- *Steroids Mean Trouble*
- *How To Say No*
- *Say No to Crack and Other Drugs (McGruff)*
- *Killer Crack*

The Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act provides funding to help schools prevent violence and deal with drug abuse. Your school and community may qualify for funds. *For information, turn to page 58.*

MAKING COLLEGE MORE ACCESSIBLE

I. Key Facts

Areas of Progress. Higher education in America is the jewel of education worldwide. Our diverse universities produce more Nobel laureates than any other higher education system in the world.

✓ **Enrollment in colleges, universities, and technical schools has increased.** Total annual fall enrollment in colleges, universities, and technical schools increased 17 percent in the last decade, from 12.4 million to 14.5-million students. Indeed, the proportion of people aged 25 and over who have completed four or more years of college increased from 18 percent in 1982 to 22 percent in 1993.

✓ **Many Americans actively participate in education programs beyond high school.** In 1991, nearly 24 percent of Americans aged 25 to 64 had completed college compared to about 17 percent of Canadians and 13 percent of Japanese. Every year, students from other countries attend American colleges and universities.

✓ **Postsecondary graduation improves Americans' quality of life.** Workers with bachelor's degrees earn on average almost $14,000 more a year than workers with high school diplomas. Workers with associate degrees earn almost twice as much annually as workers who did not finish high school.

Areas that Need Attention. *Not every student who wants to attend college can. But with adequate preparation–academic and financial–more students can have the opportunity to attend community colleges or four-year colleges.*

○ **Some students do not understand the value of postsecondary education.** At least two-thirds of adolescents regularly report problems in choosing and preparing for careers. Students often say that they do not understand the connection between what they learn in high school and the knowledge that they will need

after they graduate to get a good job or go on to college or technical school. As a result, many do not take challenging courses that will prepare them for college-level work.

- **Families do not actively plan for their children's postsecondary education.** Many students and their families do not plan financially for college. In addition, many parents do not ask middle and high schools that do not offer college prep and tech prep classes to make these classes available.

II. Ten Activities That Can Make College More Accessible

1 **Families and community members**: Find out whether the high schools in your district offer challenging classes that are recommended for college-bound students and tech prep programs. These include courses such as algebra I and II, geometry, trigonometry, calculus, biology, chemistry, physics, foreign languages, advanced technology, computers, the arts, music, literature and composition, and advanced placement classes. If the schools do not offer challenging courses in all core subject areas, contact the school board and ask for such courses. Encourage your children to take the courses that are recommended for college-bound students and for career fields that require one or two years of postsecondary education.

2 **Colleges**: Inform middle- and high-school students, teachers, and parents which courses are needed to get into college and which are needed for the various college majors. Help parents and grandparents learn about financial aid and show them how they can save for college. Build partnerships with local K-12 schools to improve academic preparation for college.

3 **Schools**: Offer college-prep, technical classes, and challenging coursework to all students. Be sure all students and their families know about these courses in time to plan their academic program, and build local partnerships with colleges, community colleges, universities, and businesses.

4 **Community members, religious groups, and businesses**: Call the schools in your area to volunteer as a mentor or tutor. Mentors can help students learn about many different kinds of careers and college programs.

5 **Businesses**: Help students learn more about the kinds of careers that exist and the educational preparation that those careers require. Volunteer to visit a school and talk to students about the education and training that you received in order to get your job. Discuss the connection between the skills and knowledge you gained in high school and college, and the skills and knowledge that you use each day at work. Sponsor shadowing programs, internships, and apprenticeships for middle school, high school, and college students so they can learn about careers first hand.

6 **Community members, colleges, and religious groups**: Take a group of students and their families to visit local colleges. Many students have never been exposed to the academic side of a college campus and aren't familiar with college programs. You can arrange to have the admissions office talk to students about the courses they'll need to enroll, what scholarships and financial aid are available, and the many exciting and rewarding careers that college graduates can pursue.

7 **Colleges, community members, and businesses**: Help high school guidance counselors to conduct college fairs not just once a year but periodically throughout the year. You can help by contacting several colleges, making arrangements for college representatives to attend, publicizing the event, and setting up college visits.

8 **Colleges, community members, religious groups, and businesses**: Volunteer to help local high school students learn about different college programs, the college application process, and financial aid forms. Counselors in many high schools do not have the time to provide one-on-one college counseling and guidance to each student.

9 **Businesses**: If you have expertise in financial planning and are familiar with the ways that families can save money for college, volunteer to talk to students and parents at an elementary school or middle school in your area about various savings strategies.

10 **Community members and businesses**: Provide opportunities for AmeriCorps and college work-study students to work in the community and earn money for college. Volunteer to help high school students research sources of financial aid. Go with them to the library to help them find reference books and guides to scholarships. Also make sure that they explore all available institutional, state, and federal financial aid.

III. Where To Go for More Help

PUBLICATIONS

The Occupational Outlook Handbook, U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. Available in most libraries.

Preparing Your Child for College: A Resource Book for Parents, Second Edition, U.S. Department of Education. For a free copy, write: Consumer Information Center, Department 510B, Pueblo, CO 81009.

The Student Guide: Financial Aid from the U.S. Department of Education. Call 1-800-4FED-AID to order a free copy.

Careers for the '90s: Everything You Need To Know to Find the Right Career. Research and Education Association, 1992.

The College Board Guide to Jobs and Career Planning by Joyce Slayton Mitchell. The College Board, 1994.

The College Handbook, 1996. The College Board, 1995.

Peterson's Guide to Four-Year Colleges, 1996, Twenty-Sixth Edition. Peterson's Guides, Inc., 1995.

Rugg's Recommendations on the Colleges, Eleventh Edition. Rugg's Recommendations, 1994.

Barron's How To Prepare for the Scholastic Aptitude Test, Eighteenth Edition, by Samuel C. Brownstein, Mitchell Weiner, and Sharon Weiner Green. Barron's Educational Series, Inc., 1994.

College Financial Aid, Fifth Edition. College Research Group of Concord, Mass., and John Schwartz. Arco Publishing, a Division of Simon and Schuster, Inc., 1993.

The Scholarship Book, Fourth Edition, by Daniel J. Cassidy and Michael J. Alves. Prentice Hall, Inc., 1993.

Best Buys in College Education, Third Edition, by Lucia Solorzano, Barron's Educational Series, Inc., 1994.

Cracking the SAT and PSAT, 1996 Edition, by Adam Robinson and John Katzman. The Princeton Review, Random House, Inc., 1995.

OTHER RESOURCES

AWARE Software

The U.S. Department of Education has a free computer software package designed to provide information to middle and high school students about postsecondary opportunities. AWARE software can be obtained by writing or calling:

Federal Student Aid Information Center
P.O. Box 84
Washington, DC 20044-0084
Call toll-free: 1-800-4FED-AID

EXCELL

This Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute data base provides scholarship information. Call 1-800-392-3532.

Videos available for two-week loans by calling 1-800-USA-Learn:

The U.S. Department of Education has available tapes of the Goals 2000 Satellite Town Meetings and other products that are available free of charge through a lending library. VHS videotapes are available on loan for a two- week period. The Goals 2000 Satellite Town Meeting is not copyrighted and viewers are encouraged to make copies and distribute them in their communities. If you plan to broadcast the Satellite Town Meeting and need a broadcast-quality 3/4" videotape, call 1-800-USA-LEARN. These videos include:

Satellite Town Meeting #1 **March 9, 1993**
"Involving Colleges, Universities & Community Colleges"

ORGANIZATIONS
You can seek information from your local school guidance counselor, local community college or university, and some community and service associations. Here are some other resources that you can use to find out more about planning for careers and college:

For information on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and the Achievement Tests, write or call:

The College Board SAT Program
P.O. Box 6200
Princeton, NJ 08541-6200
609-771-7600

For information on the ACT, write or call:

ACT Registration
P.O. Box 414
Iowa City, IA 52243
319-337-1270

For information on the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT), write or call:

PSAT/NMSQT
P.O. Box 6200
Princeton, NJ 08541-6200
609-771-7070

For information about the AmeriCorps program, call 1-800-94ACORPS.

The U. S. Department of Education can offer financial assistance and other guidance to families who are planning to send their children to college. *Turn to page 58 for information.*

GETTING TECHNOLOGY AND COMPUTERS INTO THE CLASSROOM

I. Key Facts

Areas of Progress. *Many schools are using technology in their classrooms to provide engaging and challenging learning experiences. Computers help students learn at their own pace, provide unlimited sources of information, offer access to other learners and mentors, and motivate students of all ages. Here are some examples of how technology is being used in many classrooms.*

- ✓ **Technology provides a new learning medium.** Students are learning to gather information, organize their thinking, revise their work, collaborate on projects with others, and present knowledge to audiences.

- ✓ **Administrators give computer learning high marks.** In a study conducted among educational administrators, two-thirds reported a broad range of improvement in student grades and performance. More than half said student performance improved between 5 and 15 percent, while 40 percent said the improvement ranged from 16 to more than 50 percent.

- ✓ **Schools are recognizing the merits of online learning.** Sixty-seven percent of public schools have plans to implement or upgrade a wide area computer network.

Areas that Need Attention. *Too many schools have yet to reap the full benefits of technology. In the information age, we still have schools that were designed for the factory age. In classrooms that could be modern communication centers for learning, the basic tools of instruction continue to be the blackboard and chalk. Only a handful of schools have access to the new technologies that are becoming central to our lives. Indeed, many schools have less technology than the neighborhood grocery store.*

- **Internet access is very limited.** Only three percent of the nation's public school classrooms have access to the Internet.

- **Teachers need training with the new technologies.** For schools to take advantage of technology, teachers must have more time and opportunity to integrate it into the curriculum. The Congressional Office of Technology Assessment found that a majority of teachers feel inadequately trained to use technology and are not aware of how technology can improve learning or help them do their jobs better.

- **Funding is a major barrier.** Lack of funding is the most often cited reason for failure to get up-to-date telecommunications in schools. While the Information Superhighway is on the front pages of daily newspapers, lack of funds keeps schools from building their on-ramps. Communities should get involved in deciding how best to pay for technology in schools.

- **Poor resource planning is common.** Even when schools have the resources to spend on technology, they often hurry to buy equipment without sufficient planning and without investing in training and support.

II. Ten Things You Can Do To Make Technology More Available

1 **Families**: Encourage your school to provide access to the computer lab after school and on weekends.

2 **Families and community organizations**: Explore options for the use of technology in the schools and in the home, such as take-home personal computers from schools and libraries.

3 **Families, community groups, religious organizations, and businesses**: Develop a technology plan for your school that explores how technology can support students, teachers, and administrators. Talk with local cable, telecommunications, and wireless companies about ways to improve technical facilities at your

local school, including telephones in the classrooms, e-mail linkages across the building, and free or low-cost modem access between school and home.

4 **Schools**: Work with local businesses to set up a voice-mail system and homework hotlines to help parents communicate with teachers and principals.

5 **Schools**: Make the use of technology and computers a learning priority at every grade level. Provide opportunities for teachers with computers to demonstrate how technology can be applied to classroom teaching and learning. Work with local community colleges or technical schools to offer professional development opportunities for teachers using online materials and online discussions. Allow time for technology-literate teachers to help their other colleagues. Invite families to visit the classroom while students are using the computers. Offer Saturday family and senior citizen computer classes taught by students and teachers.

6 **Schools**: Set up a local area network in your school to share information about useful software and send home ideas for family-student learning. Set up a computer lending library so families can borrow computers and software. Ask parents who are computer literate to work with families who want to learn about technology.

7 **Community groups, libraries, and religious organizations**: Establish computer labs in neighborhood centers. Offer family classes on computing. Encourage students, families, and teachers to access the World Wide Web through your local library or via online services at home, and build relationships with pen pals in other communities or countries.

8 **Community groups and businesses**: Explore ways that technology can be used to enhance learning for children with disabilities, students with limited English proficiency, and other students with special needs.

9 **Businesses**: Establish a computer donation and upgrading program for schools and low-income families. Assist schools directly by supplying used, no-cost, or low-cost computers and software, modems, and training and support to help teachers use technology in the classroom.

10 **Businesses**: Act as an online mentor to students, parents, teachers, and community members who are exploring the best ways to use new technology for learning. If you use the Internet, help teachers learn how they and their students can use it, too.

III. Where To Go for More Help

ORGANIZATIONS

You can check with the technology coordinator in your local school district or state education agency, your local library, and local Computer Users Groups for further help. Check your local telephone directory for the number of the Computer Users Groups. In addition, there are national organizations such as:

The International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE)
1787 Agate St.
Eugene, OR 97403-1923
1-800-336-5191 or 503-346-4414.

Educational Resources Information Clearinghouses (ERIC)
ACCESS ERIC
1600 Research Blvd.
Rockville, MD 20850-3172
1-800-LET-ERIC
AskERIC (askeric@ericir.syr.edu)

The National Parent Information Network
ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education
University of Illinois
805 W. Pennsylvania Ave.
Urbana, IL 61801-4897
1-800-583-4135 or 217-333-1386

The Eisenhower National Clearinghouse for Mathematics and Science Education Projects
The Ohio State University
1929 Kenny Road
Columbus, OH 43210-1079
614-292-1373

ONLINE RESOURCES
If you have access to any online service or to the Internet, you can reach our World Wide Web site at http://www.ed.gov; our gopher server is at gopher.ed.gov (or select North America-->USA-->General-->U.S. Department of Education from the All/Other Gophers menu on your system.) FTP users can ftp to ftp.ed.gov and log on as anonymous. E-mail users can get our catalog and instructions on how to use our mail server by sending e-mail to almanac@inet.ed.gov; in the body of the message, type send catalog.

Videos available for two-week loans by calling 1-800-USA-Learn:

The U.S. Department of Education has available tapes of the Goals 2000 Satellite Town Meetings and other products that are available free of charge through a lending library. VHS videotapes are available on loan for a two-week period. The Goals 2000 Satellite Town Meeting is not copyrighted and viewers are encouraged to make copies and distribute them in their communities. If you plan to broadcast the Satellite Town Meeting and need a broadcast-quality 3/4" videotape, call 1-800-USA-LEARN. These videos include:

Satellite Town Meeting #16 **October 18, 1984**
"Learning On-line: Education and the Information Super Highway"

Satellite Town Meeting #7 **October 19, 1993**
"New Technology: Transforming Education"

Funding is available to communities that want to use powerful new technologies to improve learning. Challenge Grants for Technology in Education are available, and the Star Schools program offers grants that create telecommunications partnerships. For information about these programs, *see page 58.*

RAISING STANDARDS OF ACHIEVEMENT AND DISCIPLINE

I. Key Facts

Areas of Progress. *In 1989, the nation's governors, led by then-Governor Clinton and then-President Bush reached agreement that unless the nation established clear education goals and citizens worked cooperatively to achieve them, the United States would be unprepared for the challenges of the 21st century. Congress adopted eight National Education Goals in 1994 and states, national organizations, and communities are working on raising academic standards to reach the Goals. Communities across the country are also adopting fair but rigorous codes of discipline that create classroom environments conducive to learning.*

✓ **High expectations and high standards bring out the best in students and schools.** One of the ways that families, communities, and school personnel choose to work together to improve their schools is to help set high academic and occupational standards and help students work hard to meet them.

✓ **Standards are best set at the state and local levels.** Local schools and communities can get help in setting their own high standards by reviewing standards being developed by national organizations, states, and local communities. See "Where to Go for More Help" at the end of this section.

✓ **Safe schools are a precondition for learning.** Another way families, communities, and school personnel work to improve schools is to establish guidelines and standards for safe schools and disciplined student behavior. When children and teachers feel safe in their schools, teaching and learning are significantly improved.

✓ **Increased performance in math and science is tied to standards.** One explanation for improvements in math and science achievement in America over the past 10 years is that

schools, states, and the federal government have promoted higher math standards and have encouraged students to take more rigorous science and math courses.

Areas that Need Attention. *While states and communities have made much progress on developing high, challenging standards for all students, academic standards are still too low and many students still suffer from the tyranny of low expectations.*

- **Too many students take a watered-down curriculum.** Many students are in the general track in high school, not preparing for college or occupations with a promising future. About 60 percent of students do not take the rigorous core curriculum recommended 10 years ago in the landmark study, *A Nation At Risk*.

- **Schools are offering fewer choices.** In budget crises, schools are reducing or eliminating gifted and talented classes, arts education, and extracurricular activities.

II. Ten Activities That Can Help Raise Standards of Achievement and Discipline

1 **Families**: Make sure your children enroll in challenging courses. Encourage high schoolers to take advanced placement courses and/or advanced technical and occupational courses. Be as involved as you can in your children's education each and every day. Show up at any event to reinforce your child's special interest. And always expect your children to learn.

2 **Colleges**: Share with teachers, parents, and students the type of skills and work habits needed to be successful in college work. Explain how taking advanced placement courses in high school is a great advantage when entering college. Tell them that taking advanced career preparation or tech-prep courses prepares students both to enter the workforce and for later college work.

3 **Families, schools, community members, religious groups, businesses, and military organizations**: Sponsor community

discussion groups about the high standards needed for today's students to achieve. In partnership with local schools, develop statements of what students are expected to know and be able to do as a result of their education. Work with schools to develop clear, high standards of achievement for all students--those going directly to college and those in occupational or tech-prep courses preparing for careers. Make sure students have access to high-level instruction in all the core subjects--English, math, science, the arts, civics, geography, history, economics, and foreign languages--and in key occupational areas.

4 **Families, schools, community members, religious groups, businesses, and military organizations**: Convene an assembly, a discussion group, or after- school program to tell personal stories to students about how "Going the Extra Mile Made A Difference In My Life." These stories should reinforce the real benefits of having high academic, work, and personal standards that require discipline, extra effort, dedicated study, and persistence.

5 **Students and schools**: Encourage students to work hard to achieve the school's standards and their personal goals. Convene small groups of students from your school and ask them to put into writing what they expect to know and be able to do when they graduate. Ask them: What do they want to do after completing high school (further education, work, independent living) and what do they have to do to prepare for those activities? What knowledge and skills will they have to have to succeed? Share the results with school staff, the student body, and the PTA.

6 **Students and schools**: Develop an honor code for behavior in school. Convene a meeting in which students join with parents, teachers, principals, school board members, administrators, and community members to develop a list of behaviors that contribute to a positive school environment. Develop ways to implement the code. Elect a panel of parents, teachers, students, and community members to work with students who have trouble meeting the honor code standards.

7 **Community groups and religious organizations**: Conduct conflict resolution workshops that teach children how to respond without violence when someone is bothering them. Work with students on an anti-violence campaign.

8 **Community and religious groups, businesses, law enforcement organizations, and members of the military**: Offer mentoring and tutoring programs and homework centers to help children do well in learning their challenging coursework. Reinforce the basic American values necessary for good citizenship.

9 **Community and religious groups, schools, law enforcement organizations, and members of the military**: Organize a regular time during the week for parent/child sports, such as basketball, softball, volleyball, kickball, or soccer. Sponsor joint cultural events. Try to make the event an ongoing school activity with parents and children playing these and other games together, or create arts-and-crafts, music-and-dancing evenings.

10 **Businesses**: Adopt flexible employee leave policies that allow family members to attend school conferences or volunteer in their child's school. Encourage part-time student employees to attend school every day and to study hard. Ask to see transcripts and diplomas when high school graduates apply for jobs, and call teachers or principals to get job references. This will send students the message that achievement in school counts in the real world. Encourage those without diplomas or needed skills to go back to school or college. Share with the school and the community the skills that are needed for today's--and tomorrow's--jobs, and work with schools to help students learn those skills.

III. Where To Go for More Help

You can contact your local school, school district, or state department of education to find out what's going on in your community and state to develop and set educational and occupational standards. The following are other sources of information:

ORGANIZATIONS

Council of Chief State School Officers
1 Massachusetts Avenue, NW/Suite 700
Washington, DC 20001-1431
202-408-5505

Council for Basic Education
1319 F Street, NW
Washington, DC 20004
202-347-4171

National Alliance of Business
1201 New York Ave., NW
Suite 700
Washington, DC 20005-3917
202-289-2888

Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund
634 South Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90014
213-629-2512

The National Urban League
500 East 62nd Street
New York, NY 10021-8379
212-310-9000

National Association of Secondary School Principals
1904 Association Drive
Reston, VA 22091
703-860-0220

The following associations and organizations are coordinating the development of voluntary standards:

Math
National Council of Teachers of Mathematics
1906 Association Drive
Reston, VA 22091
1-800-235-7566

Arts
Music Educators National Conference
1806 Robert Fulton Drive
Reston, VA 22091
1-800-828-0229

Civics and Government
Center for Civic Education
5146 Douglas Fir Road
Calabasas, CA 91302
1-800-350-4223

Foreign Language
American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages
6 Executive Blvd.
Yonkers, NY 10701-6801
914-963-8830

Geography
National Geographic Society
P.O. Box 1640
Washington, DC 20013-1640
1-800-368-2728

Science
National Research Council
National Science Education Standards Project
2101 Constitution Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20418
202-334-1399

Occupational Standards-- Bioscience
Education Development Center
55 Chapel St.
Newton, MA 02158
617-969-7100

Occupational Standards--Chemical Process Industries
American Chemical Society
1155 16th St. NW
Washington, DC 20036
202-872-8734

Occupational Standards--Electronics
American Electronics Association
5201 Great American Parkway
Box 54990
Santa Clara, CA 95056
408-987-4267

Occupational Standards--Photonics
Center for Occupational Research and Development
601 Lake Air Drive
Waco, TX 76710
817-772-8756

PUBLICATIONS

Continuing the Commitment: Essential Components of a Successful Education System. The Business Roundtable. Education Public Policy Agenda. Washington, D.C., May 1995.

Making Standards Matter: A Fifty-State Progress Report on Efforts to Raise Academic Standards. American Federation of Teachers, Educational Issues Department. Washington, D.C., 1995.

Reaching Standards: A Progress Report on Mathematics. Policy Information Center, Educational Testing Service. Princeton, N. J., 1995.

Student Portfolio Handbook. Middle School Mathematics. Field Trial Version. New Standards Project. Washington, D.C., 1994.

Teachers and GOALS 2000: Leading the Journey Toward High Standards for All Students. U.S. Department of Education. Washington, D.C., 1995.

"Considering Standards." *Basic Education*. Council for Basic Education. Washington, D.C., January 1995.

"Achieving High Standards," by Albert Shanker. American Federation of Teachers. Washington, D.C., July 1993.

"Struggling for Standards." *Education Week*. Special Report. Washington, D.C., April 12, 1995.

State Content Standards. Directory of state projects funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement. Washington, D.C., 1995.

"High Expectations: High Standards." (In progress.) U. S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement. Washington, D.C.

AUDIO-VISUAL AIDS

The U. S. Department of Education has five videos available that explain how the Goals 2000: Educate America Act helps states and communities to improve their schools. One video is right for all audiences, and four are designed for specialized audiences. Call 1-800-USA-LEARN for information about obtaining videos for your group or school. The videos include:

Goals 2000: A New Standard of Learning, with Shari Lewis. For all audiences. Also available in Spanish.
Goals 2000: Taking Action for America's Children, for education policymakers, public officials, and community leaders.
Goals 2000: Education is Everybody's Business, for business people.
Goals 2000: Strong Families, Strong Schools, for parents, family members, and schools.
Goals 2000: Every Teacher, Every Child, for teachers.

Videos available for two-week loans by calling 1-800-USA-Learn:

The U.S. Department of Education has available tapes of the Goals 2000 Satellite Town Meetings and other products that are available free of charge through a lending library. VHS videotapes are available on

loan for a two-week period. The Goals 2000 Satellite Town Meeting is not copyrighted and viewers are encouraged to make copies and distribute them in their communities. If you plan to broadcast the Satellite Town Meeting and need a broadcast-quality 3/4" videotape, call 1-800-USA-LEARN. These videos include:

Satellite Town Meeting #15 **September 28, 1994**
"Mobilizing Your Community to Achieve the National Education Goals"

Satellite Town Meeting #11 **March 15, 1994**
"Preparing World-Class Teachers"

Satellite Town Meeting #10 **February 15, 1994**
"Helping ALL Students Reach High Standards"

Satellite Town Meeting #8 **November 16, 1993**
"Transforming Kentucky's Schools: A Profile of Systemic Reform"

Satellite Town Meeting #6 **September 21, 1993**
"Reaching High Standards for All Students"

Key to the Future: National Summit on Education (April 5, 1995) A roundtable discussion featuring leaders in education, business, and community organizations from around the country. This event, held in honor of the tenth anniversary of the publication of *A Nation At Risk*, begins with comments by former Secretary of Education Terrell H. Bell and Sen. James Jeffords of Vermont.

The Goals 2000: Educate America Act makes funding available to schools and communities that want to raise academic standards, lift student achievement, and improve teaching and classroom discipline. Your school may qualify for funds. *For information, see page 58.*

TEACHING AND CONNECTING YOUNG PEOPLE TO REAL LIFE SKILLS THAT PREPARE THEM FOR WORK AND ADULTHOOD

I. Key Facts

***Areas of Progress**. Linking community resources with family and school activities is an important way to enhance learning. Throughout the nation, businesses are partnering with schools to provide school-to-work apprenticeships, internships, and work-study programs that give students hands-on learning experience.*

✓ **Libraries, museums, theaters, businesses and others are useful learning tools.** There are many resources in a community that offer meaningful learning experiences for children in a wide array of areas. Libraries, museums, observatories, science labs, aquariums, theaters, symphonies, and businesses can all be linked with schools and community groups to enrich teaching and learning during the regular school day as well as provide after-school, weekend, and summer learning experiences for families and children. Many of these institutions have special family programming.

✓ **Time outside the classroom is a time to learn, too.** Studies show that students' activities out of school significantly affect their social development and academic success. For example, programs designed to encourage and assist students to complete their homework can affect academic achievement while providing safe care. Children under adult supervision in a formal program have demonstrated improved achievement and better attitudes towards school than their friends in self-or sibling care. Children on their own during after-school hours are more likely to feel bored, to be fearful of their safety, and to engage in delinquent activities such as drug and alcohol abuse.

✓ **Businesses have a key role in linking learning experiences with the interests of older students.** Many communities around the country have launched "school-to-work" apprenticeship and internship programs. These usually offer classroom learning that is related to the work experience, career counseling, and links to formal education and training programs at postsecondary institutions.

Areas that Need Attention. *While research clearly shows that activities supplementing learning during the regular school day benefit students' school performance, these activities are the exception rather than the norm. Getting students to attend enriching cultural, scientific, artistic, musical, sports and recreational, service-oriented, and craft activities is not always easy due to community barriers.*

- **School-to-work opportunities are not typical.** Compared to many other developed countries, the United States does not provide many work-study, apprenticeship opportunities, or internships for high school or college students.

- **After-school and summer activities for youth are uncommon.** Far too many young people have little or nothing to do after school or in the summer, leaving them susceptible to the dangerous influences of drugs, gangs, and violence. Studies have shown that this is especially true in inner cities that have fewer community resources than their neighboring suburbs. Inner cities do, however, have cultural resources (museums and theaters) that can provide enriching activities and are often not busy during after-school hours.

- **A lack of community-school partnerships and transportation impede student activities.** Even when communities have institutions that can help, students often can't take advantage because of poor transportation or because schools have not cultivated working relationships with these institutions.

II. Ten Activities To Link Your Schools and Students with Community Resources

1 **Families**: Go to the library and ask for information about learning opportunities in the community. Take your children on regular visits to the libraries, museums, cultural events, and activities at local colleges. Admission is often free or low in cost.

2 **Families**: Explore career and school-to-work opportunities for your children and urge them to take advantage. Discuss career plans with them on a regular basis. Show them that you believe in their capabilities.

3 **Schools**: Open the school building to community groups for activities before and after school, on weekends, and during the summer. Invite local community college or university staff to offer weekend classes to families and community members. Enrich daily instruction by connecting with local resources. Offer service learning opportunities where young people work on community problems or challenges. Help link students and families with other community institutions.

4 **Schools, businesses, and community groups:** Work with local and school libraries and community groups to create a resource directory of all extracurricular programs and activities available for children in the community. The directory should include information such as eligible age groups costs, schedules, and locations.

5 **Community, military, and religious groups**: Offer affordable, quality after-school and summer learning opportunities. Provide resource people and activities for teachers to enrich learning during and outside the regular school day.

6 **Community members and businesses**: Volunteer to help schools develop courses that will prepare students for jobs that are available in the area. Help link students with wholesome activities in the community which reinforce learning.

7 **Businesses**: Contact the high schools in your area to see if there is a school-to-work or tech prep program available. If a program exists, offer to participate by providing work-based learning experiences for students, apprenticeships, internships, and training. If no program exists, start one by working with other employers, schools, and community colleges. Ask employees to volunteer at school to talk about their jobs and demonstrate what they do. Another good idea is to help students and teachers set up business ventures. Buy products and services from them.

8 **Businesses**: Hire qualified graduates of school-to-work programs. Set up a program where students can shadow employees to learn about their jobs. Make high school grades meaningful by asking prospective employees to show you their transcripts.

9 **Businesses**: Help employees to fund before and after-school learning and extracurricular opportunities for their children.

10 **Employees**: Urge your employer to participate in a school-to-work program. Volunteer to serve as a mentor or supervisor for students who participate.

III. Where To Go for More Help

ORGANIZATIONS

The following can be useful community resources: libraries, museums, science laboratories, observatories, theaters, and symphonies. Civic and community organizations like the Kiwanis, Rotary Club, Lions, Elks, Urban League, Boys and Girls Clubs, Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, 4-H Clubs, and YMCAs can be important local resources. Service learning opportunities are important, too, like local AmeriCorps projects. In addition, Parent Information and Resource Centers will be funded through Title IV of the GOALS 2000: Educate America Act by September 31, 1995. The law authorizes one center in every state by 1998.

The following organizations can provide assistance to groups and organizations seeking to develop school-to-work programs.

School-To-Work Opportunities Information Center
Room 210, 400 Virginia Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20024
202- 401-6222

The School-to-Work National Employer Leadership Council
1001 Connecticut Ave., N.W.
Suite 310
Washington, D.C. 20036
202-822-8027

The National Center on Education and the Economy
Workforce Skills Program
700 Eleventh St., NW, Suite 750
Washington, DC 20001
202-783-3668

The Bay State Skills Corporation
101 Summer St.
Second Floor
Boston, MA 02110
617-292-5100

For information about the AmeriCorps program, call 1-800-94ACORPS.

PUBLICATIONS

The Arts and Education: Partners in Achieving Our National Education Goals. Produced by the Goals 2000 Arts Education Partnership and available from the Council of Chief State School Officers, One Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Suite 700, Washington, D.C. 20001-1431, 202-408-5505.

"Using Local Resources: The Power of Partnerships" produced by the National Coalition for Education in the Arts, available from the Music Educators National Conference, 1-800-828-0229. Cost: $1.25 includes postage.

"Building Museum School Partnerships" written by Beverly Shepherd with support from the Institute for Museum Services, available from the American Association of Museums Bookstore, 1225 Eye St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005, 202-289-1818. Cost: $30.00.

"Arts and Education Planning: Three Local Communities" Vol 1 and 2. Available from the National Assembly of Local Arts Agencies, 927 15th St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005, 202-371-2830. Cost: $5.00 each includes postage.

The following publications are available by calling the U.S. Department of Education at 1-800-USA-LEARN:

Invitation to Your Community: Building Community Partnerships for Learning

Moving America to the Head of the Class: 50 Simple Things You Can Do

Several publications are available free of charge from the National-School-to-Work Opportunities Information Center. The address and phone number are listed above.

Videos available for two-week loans by calling 1-800-USA-Learn:

The U.S. Department of Education has available tapes of the Goals 2000 Satellite Town Meetings and other products that are available free of charge through a lending library. VHS videotapes are available on loan for a two- week period. The Goals 2000 Satellite Town Meeting is not copyrighted and viewers are encouraged to make copies and distribute them in their communities. If you plan to broadcast the Satellite Town Meeting and need a broadcast-quality 3/4" videotape, call 1-800-USA-LEARN. These videos include:

Satellite Town Meeting #18 **January 17, 1995**
"School-to-Work: Preparing Students and Adults for Challenging Jobs"

Satellite Town Meeting #17 **November 15, 1994**
"Connecting Families and Schools: Building Partnerships that Work"

Satellite Town Meeting #14 **June 21, 1994**
"Increasing Parent Involvement in Education"

Satellite Town Meeting #13 **May 17, 1994**
"Time and Learning: New Ideas for Inside and Outside School"

Satellite Town Meeting #9 **January 18, 1994**
"The Arts and Education"

Satellite Town Meeting #3 **May 18, 1993**
"Organizing Your Community"

Satellite Town Meeting #2 **April 13, 1993**
"Transition from School to Work"

A Conversation About Education in America (August 1994). U. S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley talks with the 1994 National Principal of the Year, the 1994 Teacher of the Year, the 1994 Missouri Principal of the Year, and a parent from Fairfax County, Virginia.

Funding is available to help states and communities develop school-to-work partnerships. Your community may qualify. *For information, see page 58.*

NEED FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE? YOUR SCHOOLS MAY QUALIFY FOR FUNDING

Funds and other resources may be available to help make your *America Goes Back to School* program a success. The following provides information on how to get funding.

Helping children to learn the basics and core academic subjects:
Title I of the Improving America's Schools Act (the reauthorized Elementary and Secondary Education Act) provides resources to schools impacted by poverty to strengthen programs in the basic and core academics. In addition to funding, Title I also encourages the creation of school-parent compacts in half of the nation's schools. In these compacts, schools and parents agree on learning goals for students and both state what each will do to help children reach these goals. (A Sample Compact can be found on page 64.) A new Eisenhower Professional Development Program for teachers is also part of the Improving America's Schools Act. This program provides high quality and sustained teacher training in all core subjects. The Eisenhower program is important because better teaching is often the key to successful school improvement efforts. For information about Title I, call 202-260-0826. For more information on school-parent compacts, call 202-260-0965. The Goals 2000: Educate America Act also encourages better teaching and learning and parental involvement. For information about Goals 2000, see "Raising Standards of Achievement and Discipline," below.

Creating safe and drug-free schools:
The Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act provides funding to help schools install metal detectors and hire security guards, develop violence prevention programs, and deal with drug abuse. The act offers schools districts the flexibility to design their own comprehensive school safety programs and coordinate them with community agencies. For information, call 202-260-3954.

Making college more accessible:

Preparing your child or grandchild for college includes both academic and financial preparation. The U. S. Department of Education supplies half of the financial aid to college students in the United States Through Pell Grants, TRIO programs, new Direct Student Loans, and other programs, the Department helps millions of students, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds, to get a college education. The Department also offers helpful publications. *Preparing Your Child for College* helps families to select courses their children should take in high school to prepare for college. Parents also learn how to calculate the cost of various college options. *The Student Guide* offers information about the Department's financial aid programs, as well as information about the new AmeriCorps national service program, which allows students to earn college tuition for community work. For financial aid information, including facts about the Department's new Direct Student Loans, call 1-800-4-FEDAID. For publications, call 1-800-USA-LEARN.

Getting technology and computers into classrooms:

Challenge Grants for Technology in Education provide funding to communities to support the development and innovative use of technology to enhance learning. Challenge grants help communities to turn their schools into information age learning centers. Applications for grants must be developed by a consortium that includes at least one local educational agency with a high percentage or number of children living below the poverty line. Other members of the consortium can be state educational agencies, institutions of higher education, businesses, software designers, museums, libraries, or other appropriate organizations. The application must be submitted by a local educational agency. The first step is to submit a letter of intent to apply. Address letters to: Interagency Technology Task Force, U. S. Department of Education, 600 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, D. C. 20202-5544. For information, call 202-708-6001. The Star Schools Program is another effort that supports the work of telecommunications partnerships. Partnerships can acquire facilities and equipment and produce and distribute educational programming. For information, call 202-219-2186 or 202-219-2267.

Raising standards of achievement and discipline:

The Goals 2000: Educate America Act provides funding to help schools

raise academic and occupational skill standards, lift student achievement, encourage greater parental involvement, put computers into classrooms, and improve classroom teaching and discipline. Goals 2000 helps prepare all students for success in the 21st century. It encourages communities to create their own locally developed school improvement plans. For information, call your state education department or 202-401-0039.

School-to-work opportunities:
Funds are available to help states and communities to develop school-to-work programs that prepare students for careers and further education after graduation from high school. School-to-work is particularly valuable for the 75% of all students who will not get four-year college degrees and who need to have marketable job skills right after high school. Students in these programs (apprenticeships, Tech Prep, and others) get a high-quality education in the classroom and spend part of their time in the workplace getting hands-on work experience. The School-to-Work Opportunities Act provides seed money to communities and states to develop these programs and encourages businesses and schools to form partnerships to offer these programs to students. For more information, call your state education department or the School-to-Work Opportunities Information Center at 202-260-7278.

Other resources that are available from the U. S. Department of Education include:

- Monthly Satellite Town Meetings on education (co-sponsored by the National Alliance of Business.) These interactive meetings give you the chance to share ideas about improving education with other Americans in communities all across the nation. Call 1-800-USA-LEARN for information.

- Community Update newsletters. These monthly publications will keep you current on education news and alert you to what other communities are doing to make their schools better. Call 1-800-USA-LEARN for information.

- "A Bright New Era in Education." This brochure will tell you all about the exciting new programs launched by the U. S. Department

of Education to help you make your schools better. And it provides a list of the eight National Education Goals. Call 1-800-USA-LEARN for copies.

- Information about what works. Link up with the U. S. Department of Education online library: gopher.ed.gov or www.ed.gov.

- Talk to us! E-mail your comments or questions about educational issues to AskEric@EricIR.syr.edu or call 1-800-LET-ERIC.

AMERICA GOES BACK TO SCHOOL:
A Place for Families and the Community

is published by the U.S. Department of Education
as an initiative of
The Family Involvement Partnership for Learning

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SUPPORT THE FAMILY INVOLVEMENT PARTNERSHIP FOR LEARNING

STRONG FAMILIES, STRONG SCHOOLS

Family-School Compact for Learning

Schools and families across America are increasingly accepting mutual responsibility for children's learning. They are taking the initiative to develop family-school partnerships known as "compacts." By working together, exchanging information, sharing decision making, and collaborating in children's learning, everyone can contribute to the educational process. As a school community, we support family-school compacts and affirm the importance of family involvement in students' learning.

We commit to **including** families and community members in the daily life of the school by:

1. **Sharing responsibility** at school and at home to give students a better education and a good start in life.

-- Our school will be welcoming to parents, reach out to parents before problems arise, offer challenging courses, create safe and drug-free learning environments, include parents in school site decisions, organize tutoring and other opportunities for parents to help improve student learning, and _____.
(ADD YOUR OWN ACTIVITY).

-- Our parents will monitor student attendance, homework completion and television watching; become acquainted with teachers and administrators, when possible, volunteer in school and participate in school decision making, and _____.
(ADD YOUR OWN ACTIVITY).

2. Providing effective **two-way communication**, including reducing education jargon and breaking down language barriers.

3. **Building the capacity** for families to help children succeed in school and for school staff to work with families.

4. Improving family involvement efforts by **reviewing** progress annually and strengthening cooperative efforts.

5. _____
ADD YOUR OWN COMMITMENT.

_____	_____
President, Parents' Association	Teacher/Faculty Representative
_____	_____
Principal	Student Representative
_____	_____
Superintendent	Community/ Business Partner
_____	_____
Mayor	U.S. Secretary of Education

...SUPPORT THE FAMILY INVOLVEMENT PARTNERSHIP FOR LEARNING...

THE EMPLOYER'S PROMISE

A strong and vigorous economy, for our employers and our nation, depends upon an educated, skilled, and competent citizenry. Tomorrow's citizens, those who are getting their basic training in today's schools, are our long-term investments for the future.

Employers play an important role in the school-improvement efforts on local, state, and national levels. We can now multiply the effectiveness of such efforts by enlisting our current employees as partners in the campaign to support and better the American educational system. Any company, regardless of its size, can take steps to support parents in its workforce and to support local education.

Small investments that enable employee participation in students' academic success, and in our education system, lead to a win/win for everyone.

- ***EMPLOYERS WIN by helping prepare a highly skilled and globally competitive workforce.***
- ***EMPLOYEES WIN by making positive differences in children's education and in their local schools.***
- ***SCHOOLS WIN from increased parental and community involvement.***
- ***STUDENTS WIN from better education.***

We recognize there are many ways to get started.

- Contact a local school to discuss opportunities for cooperation.
- Explore with employees ways in which they can help children learn.
- Explore with employees ways in which they can help local schools better educate their students.
- Explore policies and practices to encourage and enable employee involvement in schools and learning.
- Contact the Family Involvement Partnership for Learning for information.

We commit to:

- Identify a contact person, authorized to explore and develop options for company involvement in our family-school-community partnership program;
- Take action to implement program; and
- Share best practices by evaluating our program annually.

A Statement of Commitmen.

We commit our organization to family-friendly practices and partnerships to support children's learning.

SIGNED:_____ PRESIDENT OR CEO:_____ DATE:_____
FOR (Company or Organization):_____
CONTACT PERSON:_____
ADDRESS:_____
CITY:_____ STATE:_____ ZIP:_____
FAX:_____ E-MAIL:_____

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STATEMENT OF COMMON PURPOSE AMONG RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES SUPPORTING FAMILY INVOLVEMENT IN LEARNING

"Train children in the right way, and when old, they will not stray"
Proverbs 22:6

As members of religious communities from across the land, we join to affirm the vital and enduring role of families in the education of children. We have always regarded families--and parents in particular--as the primary teachers of children. Encouraged by Secretary of Education Richard Riley's concern for all children and his commitment to the role of families in educating children, we call upon all people of good will to stand as one with us in support of families' participation in children's learning.

Parents and guardians need to immerse themselves in the education of their children as never before. Children need the immediate and constant support of their families. But there are other voices at odds with these goals: the voices of poverty, loneliness, and fear. Because of this, there are children who do not attend school regularly, whose test scores and grades falter, who have too much idle time, and whose parents are absent, too overwhelmed or too busy to spend time reading, talking, praying, playing, listening, helping or encouraging them.

Religious communities hear this cry. It is with this knowledge and in our unique roles that we stand united in our commitment to the involvement of family members in the education of children. We believe the participation of family members in the education and spiritual development of young people is fundamental to a child's preparation for adulthood and the responsibilities of citizenship. Our nation's future depends upon a shared concern for the education of young people.

It is imperative that religious communities join together with governments, community organizations, businesses, and public and private schools in striving to provide families, parents, grandparents, foster parents, guardians, or extended family members with the information, skills, tools, and opportunities that will encourage their participation in the total education of their children, including character education. We are committed to working together to improve children's learning through family involvement partnerships.

We are thankful for the blessings of religious liberty, a sacred trust, stated in the Declaration of Independence and guaranteed by the First Amendment of the Constitution, that enables the members of all faiths to work together freely and openly for the common good. As beneficiaries of this great legacy, we pledge our support in encouraging family involvement in the education of children.

We call upon all citizens, religious communities, community organizations, and businesses to do their share. We urge family members to become actively involved in their children's education, religious communities to work to better understand and meet educational and family needs, community organizations to sponsor meaningful youth- and family-oriented activities, and businesses to adopt family-friendly policies in the workplace. Governments need to promote public policies that encourage greater family involvement in the education of all children. We challenge our society to value and nurture our children of today so that they can be productive citizens of tomorrow.

A Statement of Commitment

We commit our religious organization to family-friendly practices and partnerships to support children's learning.

*SIGNED:*_____ *CONTACT:*_____ *DATE:*_____

*FOR (Church, synagogue, or mosque):*_____
*CONTACT PERSON:*_____
*ADDRESS:*_____
*CITY:*_____ *STATE:*_____ *ZIP:*_____
*FAX:*_____ *E-MAIL:*_____

☆ U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE:1995-398-433

National Association of Evangelicals* National Association of Independent Schools*National Association of Partners in Education*National Association of School Psychologists*National Association of Secondary School Principals*National Association of Social Workers*National Association of State Directors of Vocational and Technical Education*National Association of State Boards of Education*National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc.*National Black Child Development Institute*National Catholic Educational Association*National Center for Family Literacy*National Church of God*National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education*National Coalition of Title 1/Chapter 1 Parents*National Community Education Association*National Conference*National Council of Churches of Christ, Commission on Family Ministries*National Council of Jewish Women*National Council of La Raza*National Dropout Prevention Center*National Education Association*National Education Goals Panel*National Head Start Association*National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities*National Institute for Literacy*National Middle Schools Association*National Parent Network on Disabilities*National PTA*National Reclaim Our Youth Crusade*National Retired Teachers Association, AARP*National School Boards Association*National School Supply and Equipment Association*National Small Business United*National Urban League*Optimists International*Organizations Concerned About Rural Education*Organizations of Chinese Americans*Parent Institute*Parents as Teachers National Center Inc.*Parents for Public Schools*Parents, Inc.*Presbyterian Church (USA)*Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc.*Project Parents*Quality Education for Minorities Network*Rabbinical Assembly*Reading Is Fundamental*RMC Research*Sarah Scott Middle School, Indiana*Scholastic Inc.*School Improvement Council Assistance Project*Shiloh Baptist Church*Solomon Schechter Day School Association*Southern Baptist Convention, Christian Life Commission*U.S. Chamber of Commerce*U.S. Department of Education*Union of American Hebrew Congregations*Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America*United Church of Christ—Board for Homeland Ministries*United States Catholic Conference*United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism*United Way of America*Washington Parent Group Fund*Webster's International, Inc.*Women's American ORT*YMCA of USA*Youth Guidance of Chicago*

Your school, community group, business, or place of worship can sign on to the Family Involvement Partnership for Learning. Just fill out the sign-on sheet appropriate for your group and mail to:

Family Involvement Partnership for Learning
600 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20202-8173

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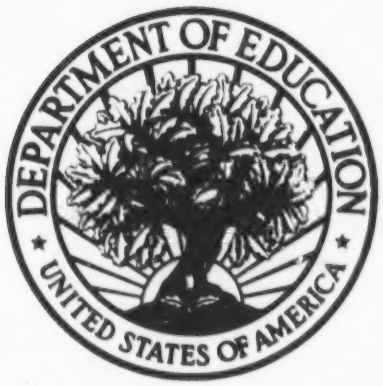

U.S. Department of Education
1-800-USA-LEARN

Our mission is to ensure equal access to education
and to promote educational excellence throughout the nation.